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RESEARCHES IN THE KJOKKENMODDINGS
AND GRAVES OF A FORMER POPULATION
OF THE COAST OF OREGON.
BY PAUL SCHUMACHER.

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Map of Port Orford, Oregon and vicinity.

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ART. II. — RESEARCHES IN THE KJÖKKENMÖDDINGS AND GRAVES OF A FORMER POPULATION OF THE COAST OF OREGON.*

BY PAUL SCHUMACHER.

PLATES 2-8.

With two hired men and a camp outfit, I left San Francisco toward the end of September, 1875, on board of the United States revenue-cutter Richard Rush, Captain Baker, having received permission to take passage on one of her northern cruises. We made landing at Port Orford, in Oregon, September 27, and the following day pitched our first camp near the fresh-water lagoon, a little to the north of the point.

From here I dispatched one of the men 45 miles down the coast to Pistol River to bring pack-animals, for which arrangement had already been made; I also engaged, in addition to the help already employed, two Oregonians in my party, whom I knew to be good packers and able hands for an expedition full of hardships, exposure to the elements, and hard labor, all of which I justly anticipated.

Before the arrival of men and animals, I, with one man left, investigated the neighborhood of the lagoon, so advantageously adapted for the location of aboriginal settlements. Near the mouth of the outlet of the lagoon, we discovered the site of a small settlement (Map 1) [Plate 2], the location of the huts being still indicated by several circular depressions, with an embankment around it of 1 or 2 feet above the average level of the somewhat elevated position, which, toward the sea, abruptly terminates in a bluff of nearly 50 feet. Across the river, dunes border the ocean for about a mile to the northward. Looking in that direction, we gain a good view, although a part of the lake, or lagoon, is hidden by the heavy timber on the right, while to the southward the steep ascent of the high rocky point immediately obstructs any view in that direction; leaving a grassy, steep cañon to the eastward, with a small running stream of good water, which passes at the foot of the settlement. About half-way from this station to the lake, and on the county trail, we find another small deserted *rancheria*. The

[* This and the succeeding article by the same author are the outcome of explorations conducted under the joint auspices of the Smithsonian Institution and the Indian Bureau, for the purpose of making a representation of the archaeology of the California coast at the United States Centennial Exposition. The articles are furnished by the Smithsonian Institution for publication by the Survey. The illustrations are from maps, sketches and plans furnished by the author.—ED.]

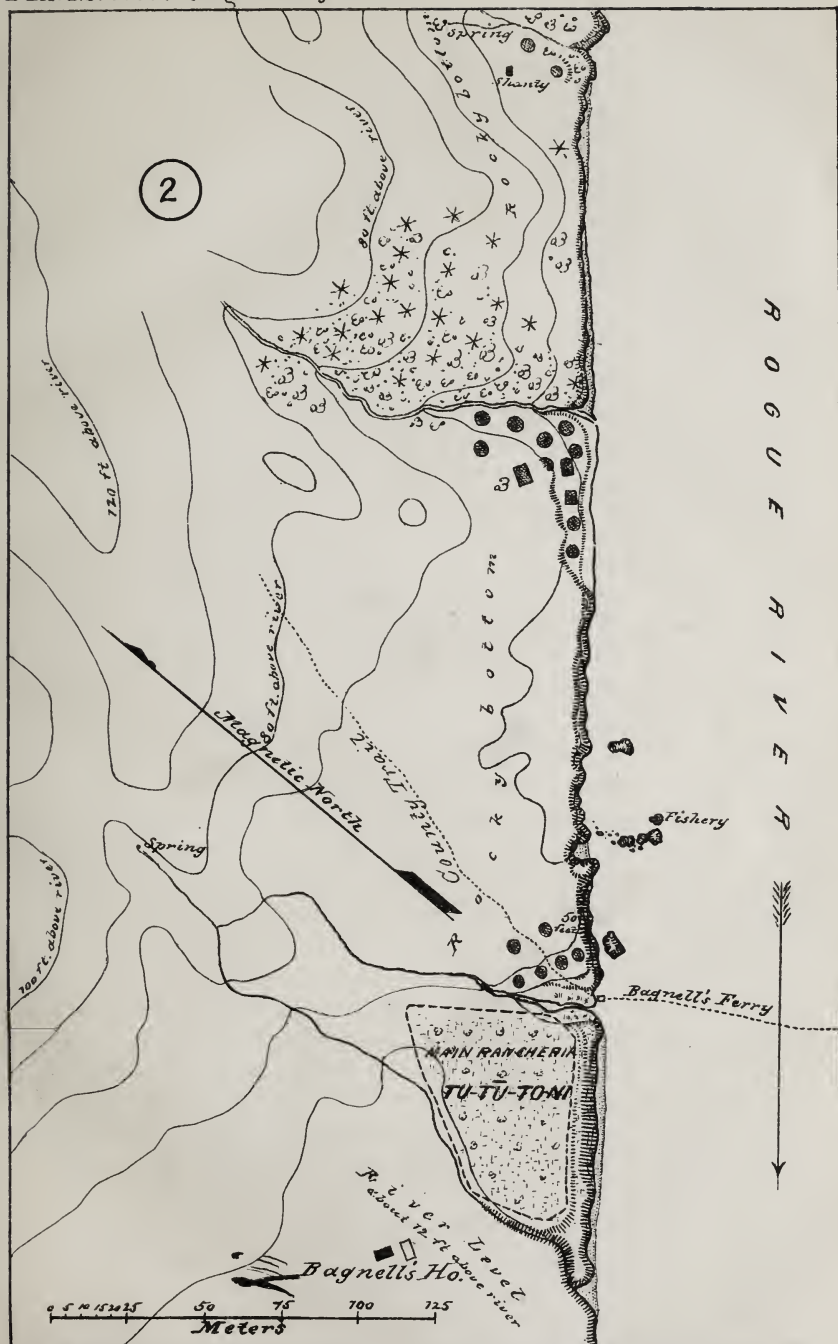
shells, which are at the first more mixed with sand and overgrown with grass, are here quite bare on the surface, which adds a fresher appearance. I looked for graves, employing the methods suggested in my southern tour, but all failed; and as even the house-sites yielded no skeletons I was inclined to believe that no graves exist here, where, by the signs, dwellings had existed only for a short time. At the mouth of the creek which supplies the small scattered town of Port Orford with water, is seen a moderately large shell-mound, partially washed away by the waters of the creek and the ocean as well, while back of the bluff, where the ground gently descends, several buildings and a garden cover the site of the deserted Indian town, thus making an exploration of the place impracticable.

During our reconnaissance, the Indians still dwelling in several places northward from here, and many others, well armed with rifles, who were passing on hunting excursions, watched our proceedings rather suspiciously, but made themselves welcome in our camp, and enjoyed our somewhat aboriginal dinners with much gusto. The meeting with Indians is not pleasant to an explorer of their forefathers' deserted hearths, as their friendly feeling is easily disturbed, and their superstitions alarmed by researches among the remains and graves of their ancestors; for this reason we did not visit Elk River, Sixes River, and other localities north of Port Orford, where Indians still live.

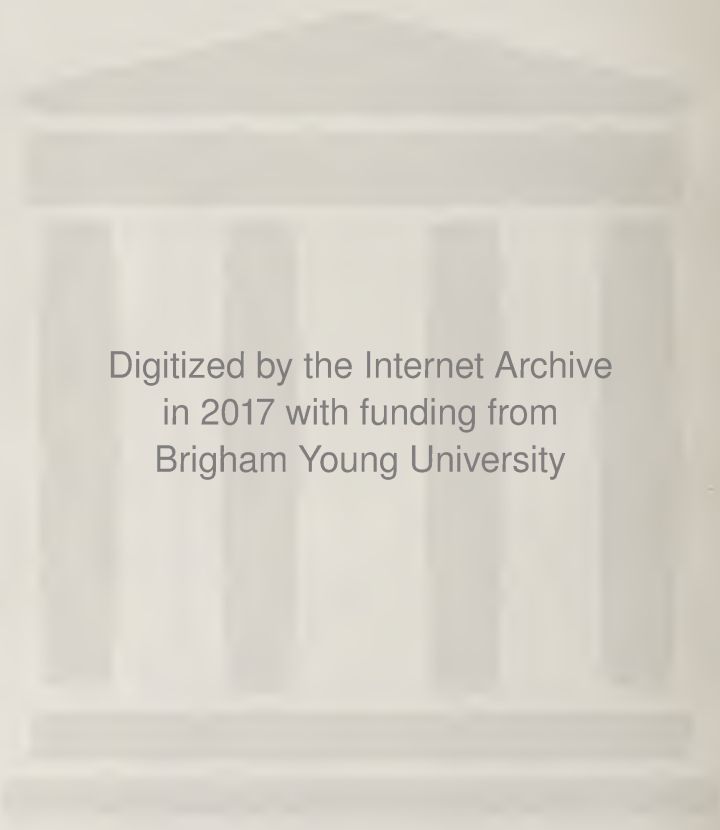
Our animals had in the mean time arrived, and after experiencing the first rain of the winter season, we started, on October 6, upon our way to Rogue River.

About 10 miles south of Port Orford, in the neighborhood of the rocks called "Three Sisters", on the bank of a creek, and close to the abrupt shore, we find the *kjökkenmøddings* of a former people located on a small flat—now covered with an orchard—bordered by the creek, and toward the sea by the ascending shore, the close proximity of which is only revealed by the roaring of the ocean, while an open view is had back in the valley. This station, I think, was the northernmost *rancheria* of the *Yu-kwā-chi*, while another one is found at Mussel Creek, about 5 miles farther south, and the largest of all at Yukwa Creek (which stream is now usually termed Euchre Creek, being a more familiar expression to the Oregonians of the present day). All these places are now under cultivation and partially occupied by building, whereby the signs, save the kitchen-refuse of the former inhabitants, became obliterated and covered. From Yukwa Creek, the trail trends back from the coast, and we could not observe the smaller settlements said to exist between here and Rogue River. A thick fog was also a strong impediment to our observations during the entire trip from Port Orford to Rogue River.

Arriving at Rogue River, we went into camp below the ferry, located at the place where the main *rancheria* of the *Tu-tū-to-ni* once existed (Map 2) [Plate 3], about five miles from the mouth, and on the right or



Map of Rancheria of the Tu-tu-to-ni Rancheria & Vicinity on Rogue River.



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north bank of the river. Over the main *rancheria*, marked by a thick layer of kjökkenmöddings, we find the usual obstruction, an orchard; while across the rivulet (the efflux of a spring issuing but little over 150 yards farther up on the rocky rise), the house-sites remained well defined; which we also notice 150 yards farther up the river, in an indentation of the steep shore, and still in another similar nook at a distance of 100 yards farther on. These places were still inhabited at the time of the Rogue River war in 1856, when here, on the left bank of the river, just across from the main *rancheria*, peace was accepted by the leader of the United States Army, and the Indians were accordingly removed to reservations. The present owner of the land and ferry, a "squaw-man", liberally gave us permission to dig in his orchard, where all signs of former houses were obliterated by the plow and obstructed by high weeds and trees. Although we made a careful search for graves, the many test-holes we dug revealed only sites of houses; the kitchen-refuse consisting of all kinds of shells (see Smithsonian Report of 1873) and a great many bones of elk and of deer, averaged about 8 feet in depth at the main station, while none were found across the rivulet on the rocky ascending bottom, where it is likely the rains had washed them into the river, and very few, not enough even to form a layer, at the two upper town-sites. The houses we excavated were square; that is to say, the subterranean part reached to a depth of about 4 feet below the surface, and measuring variously from 6 to 10 feet square. The casing of the excavation consisted of boards arranged horizontally, contrary to the vertical position in the houses of the present Klamath Indians, and was kept in its place by posts along the front. The general impression which the traces of an old aboriginal town-site makes is that of a group of huge mole-hills inverted or sunk to a small rim at its base (Sketch A) [Plate 4]. Although the excavation was found to be square, the remaining concavities, always shallow, and hardly ever more than 3 feet deep, were circular, which is attributed to the circular embankment that still surrounds it, and to the natural action of the elements in filling up a depression in loose ground. No doubt, the superstructure of the hut was of a circular shape, corresponding to the remaining embankment, and was probably placed in such a manner as to meet conically, and was covered with earth, &c. The fireplace we find on one side of the floor in a small excavation, and the smoke escaped through a draft-passage, as shown in section sketch (B) and the plan (C) [Plate 4]. We find among these house-sites a few well-preserved ones, exceptionally with square embankments (compare the sites of the first branch settlement, Map 2 [Plate 3]), but they are no doubt of recent date, and a modification between an aboriginal hut and a white man's shanty, such as we had occasion to witness among the present Klamaths at the mouth of the Klamath River, one of which I show in sketch (D), as also an inner view (E), a plan (F), and a section (G) [all on Plate 5]. The inner view shows the depression, which is in this case pentagonal, incased by boards placed

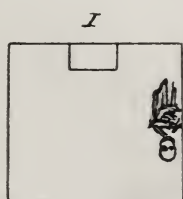
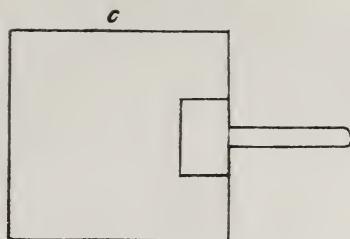
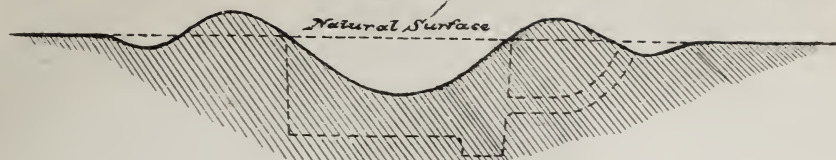
horizontally, with a fireplace in the center. The excavation is reached by a notched board, after entering the house through a circular door near the ground. The remains of the square structures of the Tu-tu-to-ni show, as at the Klamath, the marks of an ax, while the wooden parts of the older circular ones are charred at the ends and split with elkhorn wedges, of which we find so many among the *débris*.

In one of the ruins we excavated on the main *rancheria* was found a boat-shaped vessel, or dish, about nine inches in length, made, like those of our collection obtained on the islands of Santa Barbara Channel, of magnesian mica, showing also strong marks of having been exposed to fire, seemingly for the purpose of cooking food in it; furthermore, a beautiful ladle of stone, a nicely finished wedge of slate as used for repairing canoes; and among the *kjökkenmøddings* we dug over, arrow-heads and knives of stone, and many bone-carvings, were uncovered.

I cannot account for our utter failure in finding any skeletons in the main *rancheria* (the ground being well adapted for graves), either in a regular cemetery or buried in houses, as we gave our attention to both modes of interment. A cemetery probably existed in front of the *rancheria*, near the brink, where the *kjökkenmøddings* steeply descend to the edge of the river, which had, since the depopulation of the *rancheria*, risen very high, and nearly reached the top of the kitchenmiddings, according to the mark set by the present owner of the place, and washed away a large part of the refuse.

About two miles up the river from the main settlement, another *rancheria* existed, in a nice spot, sheltered by a ridge, and bordered on one side by a small stream at the foot of a steep rising, while in front the beautiful Rogue River displays its picturesque scenes (Map 3) [Plate 6]. The *kjökkenmøddings* average here a depth of two feet only. While searching for the burying-ground, we sunk many test-holes all over the place, and finally came upon a grave. It was dug three feet into a sandy soil; the sides of the lower part were lined with boards; the skeleton, doubled up in the usual manner, was resting on its back, facing the east, and was covered by a board secured by several stones, and the hole filled even with the surface of the surrounding ground. Nothing was found with the skeleton.

Rogue River was alive with trout and thickly stocked with salmon at the time of our visit; hundreds of them could be seen splashing at short intervals on the surface of the water, or resting motionless in the deep eddies near rocks and bluffs. In front of the lower or main settlement are several rocks above water, of which the farthest one out was the principal fishery of the Tu-tu-to-ni, and gave rise, it is said, to many disputes and quarrels. The rock is but eight feet above the surface of the river at common height, which elevation is well adapted for the spearing of fish by torch-light; the torch was placed in a crevice near the water-mark of the rock's face to attract the fish from out the deep holes near enough to the surface to be in easy reach of the expert spearsman.



Sketches, plan and section of excavation at Tu-tu-toni and Chétl-é-skin Rancherias

As the adjoining country of the Rogue River is also an excellent hunting-ground, of course the favorable places along its banks had been settled by Indians. This is demonstrated by several deserted camps, formerly inhabited by the *Me-ka-nē-ten*, before the mouth of the Illinois River is reached, where the main tribe of the *Shis-ta-kūs-ta* dwelt. On both banks of the mouth of the Rogue River were the *Yā-sut* stationed. That place is now obliterated by buildings and improvements.

While at Rogue River, the weather had become threatening, and rain set in on the morning of October 17 while we were finishing our preparations to move down to Pistol River. It was tedious, disagreeable work that day: the miserable trails had become slippery, and in consequence almost impassable even for our mules, which showed much opposition to carry a heavy load, made more so by a soaking rain. But all went on as well as could be expected under such disadvantageous circumstances, thanks to our experienced packers, until dark night set in, when we neared the roaring ocean, where the trail, almost at our destination, trends down a steep bluff, and passes at its base over boulders; there our animals became terrified by a loose pack to such a degree that nothing could check them, and they darted off in a full stampede, scattering the packs along the beach. This caused us considerable trouble during the rainy night in searching for and removing the stuff out of the reach of high tide.

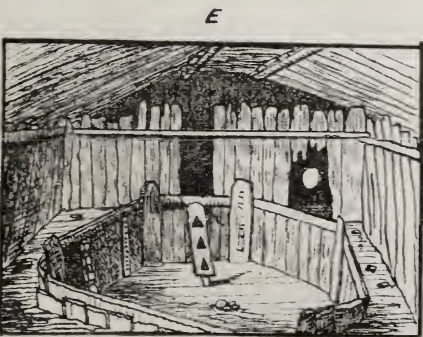
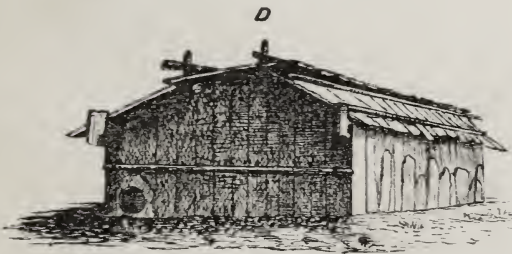
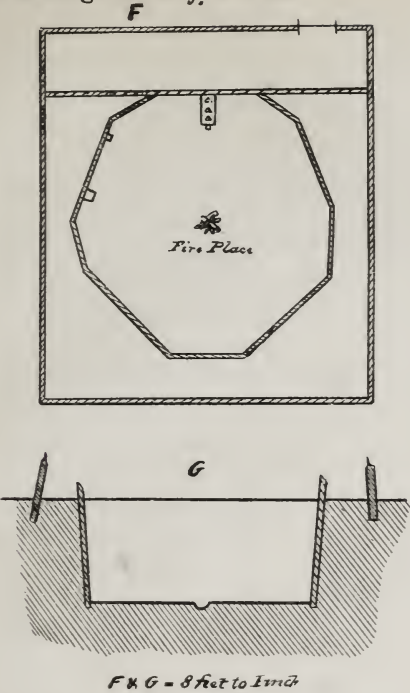
The next day we established our camp, and began excavations at the main *rancheria* of the *Chēt-l-ē-shīn* on the elevated ground at the last bend, near the mouth and north of the stream called Pistol River (Map 4) [Plate 7].

The tribe of the Chetle-e-shin once occupied the country between Cape Sebastian in the north and Mack's Arch in the south, a very prominent arch-rock lying about a mile to the southwest of Crook's Point, and nearly as far from the shore—in all about eight miles in a straight line southward of Cape Sebastian. Almost opposite of Mack's Arch, from which the tribe received its name (*Chēt-l-ē-shīn*, meaning *big rock*, as I was informed by a Chetko Indian), are found the extensive remains of their southernmost village. The next important one going north is at Crook's Point, a minor one at the eddy of the Pistol River, whence the stream runs parallel with the ocean beach for about a half mile to its outlet, where the main settlement is located. To the north of Cape Sebastian was the hunting-ground of the *Ya-sut*, having had their main station on both banks at the mouth of Rogue River, as already mentioned. South of Mack's Arch, the range commences which was formerly claimed by the *Khust-e-nēt*.

There are still visible at the main station of the Chetle-e-shin about fifty depressions of former houses, some of them obliterated by others of a subsequent occupation, and others again filled in by the Indians as if on purpose, and not by the action of time. After considerable work was done in searching for a cemetery, but without the desired result, we

again resorted to the house-sites, and especially to those filled up by human hands, which was proven to be a fact by finding human skeletons interred at the bottom of the excavation. The corpses were found without exception in the subterranean part of the ruined houses, which were here like those at Rogue River in size and wooden linings, but without the draft-passages for the smoke to escape. Doubled up, the skeletons were resting near the wall of the excavation, and faced the fireplace, as indicated in sketches (H and I) [Plate 4], which part was the most deeply covered with earth, whereby the remaining surface-indentation of such a house-site was easily discernible by an enlarged embankment, in contrast to those which were not shaped through a burial, but had adopted the form of an inverted mole-hill by the natural action of filling-up, caused by time and the elements. In one instance, two skeletons were found buried in one house, where a re-opening seemed to be evident by the flattened and unusually enlarged covering earthwork. Such a singular indentation in which a burial was made will be better understood by comparing the section diagram (H) [Plate 4] with that of a common formation (B) [Plate 4], in which latter no burial had occurred. The earth covering the skeletons was strongly mixed with charcoal, pieces of charred wood, fragments of animal bones, and shells blackened and partially consumed by fire. On the floor on which the skeletons rested was found a layer of ashes of several inches in thickness. But the fire had not affected the skeletons, as in no instance was any such damage observed, and even the remains of matting, furs, and other similar perishable material were not injured by it. It seems, therefore, evident that the hut was demolished by fire, after the owner had expired, and was buried in the ruins, covered with rubbish and earth surrounding his house. Except some glass beads found with a female skull, and three roughly-cast copper buttons with that of a male, nothing was unearthed that had apparently been deposited with the dead. Of course, in the mass of *débris* we worked over, divers articles were found, but not in such a position as to indicate an intended deposit of property of the dead in accordance with a religious or superstitious rite.

We find another large shell-mound located on loose sand about four hundred yards northward from the main settlement, where all the characteristic indications of a permanent settlement are noticed, excepting the house-sites, which likely had become filled up and obliterated by the sand drifts to which this place is exposed, as well as by the heavy rains during the winter. A stream of water passes the base of the dune, but disappears in the sandy beach. Back of the shell-mound, the ground rises gradually for a distance before it reaches the foot of a steep ridge extending back from the shore, and defining the lower boundary of an almost impenetrable country by its rough topography, its forests, and dense growth of underwood, the safe home of all kinds of game, panther, and bear. A few hundred yards up the coast from the shell-mound, near



Sketches, plan and section of present Klamath dwelling.

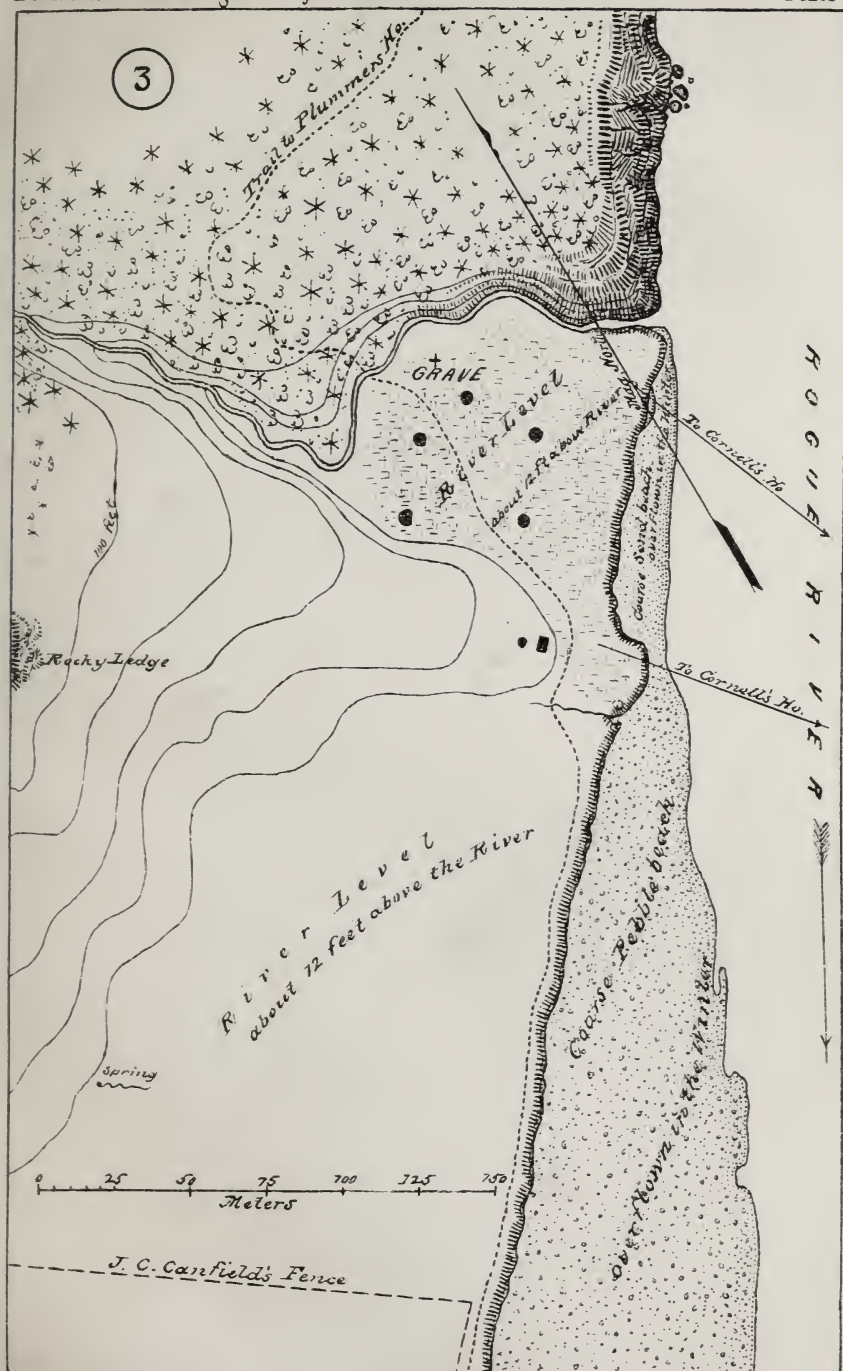
the bluff, we find indications of several house-sites, and much decayed shells and animal bones, mixed with sandy soil, producing that peculiar ash-like appearance. Neither at this place nor at the shell-mound did we discover any skeletons; and only a small addition to our collection was obtained in surface findings. In the right bank of the Pistol River, on the elevated bluff running parallel with the ocean beach, several small shell-mounds were met with; as also on the bare dunes across the river, &c.; but of these I have spoken in the Smithsonian Report of 1873.

At Pistol River, we were detained for several days by heavy rain, during which time I made a trip ten miles (by the trail) down the coast, to a place known as Hustenate, where the old *rancheria* of the *Khust-e-nēte* is located (Map 5) [Plate 8]. Here the well-defined cemetery was readily found. Mack's Arch is the northern boundary of the *Khust-e-nēte*, and Whale's Head, a prominent landmark on the ocean shore, about eight miles southward, is the southern boundary, whence the territory formerly occupied by the Chetkos extends southward. The next day we moved a light camp to Hustenate over a very rough trail, and reached that place in a heavy fall of rain of a winter storm just setting in. During the night, our tent was blown down, and shelter had to be sought for in a small shanty open to rain and wind. The location of the *rancheria* is sheltered toward the south by a rise and outreaching bluffs, while back of it, and to the northward, the ground rises rapidly, leaving a steep opening, from which issues a creek of considerable volume, which was much swollen by the rains at the time of our visit. The ground on which the *rancheria* is located has been disturbed by many slides, some of which evidently occurred since the place was abandoned by the Indians. Decayed shells and bones, mixed with sand brought up from the beach, a mass of vegetable mold and rubbish, and all sizes of beach-stone, constitute the compost of the surface-layer to a depth of two to five feet, below which dark humus is found, over a soft slaty formation of a grayish color, which is coal-bearing. The house-sites are, as usual, irregularly located over a space of a hundred yards in length and something less in width. Considering the condition of the ground upon which we find the aboriginal settlements on the Oregonian coast visited by our expedition, the opinion I have expressed in my previous report of such settlements on the southern coast of California holds good for this locality also: that all such stations had been established either on sandy ground, or that the nature of the ground had been artificially changed by layers of sand carried thither when it was rocky or hard. Sandy soil was necessary to the rude and imperfect tools for the erection of houses, which were partially dug in the ground, and surrounded by embankments. It was also a requirement for cleanliness, and healthful through its absorption of moisture in rainy seasons. About fifteen feet from the creek as well as from the shore, and but fifteen to twenty feet above the sea, are two rows of graves, dug in dark, coarse soil, bare of shells and sand, each grave being distinct one from another. On digging, the graves were found to be

very shallow, the skeletons being interred but one and a half to two feet below the surface. The sides of the excavations were lined with split redwood boards, about four feet in length and a foot in width, placed edgewise, and reaching to the floor of the grave, which was covered with beach-sand to the thickness of about one inch; the width was not over two feet, and both ends of the excavation were open, that is to say, without lining. The corpses were found doubled up in the usual manner, lying on their backs, or sideways, and facing the *rancheria* in a southeastward direction, although some were found just in an opposite way. Immediately above the body was placed a board resting on the lining, to which it was secured by cobble-stones of various sizes, some weighing as much as fifty pounds. The grave was then filled up with earth, and covered with another wide board to an even level with the surface, and probably, if we trust the remains of a few redwood stakes in close proximity to the grave, was also fenced in. I entertain no doubt that the worldly goods of those buried here, of which we did not find anything in the graves (excepting a few money-shells and glass beads), were placed on the top-board of the grave, a custom made evident by the habits of the present Klamath Indians. I lay before the reader a grave of the last-named tribe (Sketch K) [Plate 8], and give also a plan (L) [same plate], with some tools placed on the top-board, as copied in their *rancheria* at the mouth of the Klamath River, which might be well accepted as the restoration of a Khust-e-nēte grave, of which but the surface-board remained, while time and elements annihilated a part of the articles deposited over the grave, and casual visitors destroyed and carried away the rest. With babies' skeletons, and a young woman's corpse, we found some much-decayed money-shells (*Dentalium entalis*), which served to ornament the living, and were probably intended as a means for the frail little ones to pay the ferryman of the Indian Styx. A few glass beads were also found with skeletons of grown females. The shape of the skulls is remarkable for the artificial deformity, the forehead receding and the occiput protruding disproportionately.

We moved back to Pistol River in stormy weather, which increased during the following day to one of those heavy Oregon winter storms that define epochs in the chronology of the country people. Pistol River swelled rapidly, and overflowed most of the valley near its mouth. Large tracts of the river-bank were washed away, and countless trees, among them gigantic spruces, were seen floating in rapid drifts to sea or ramming in at some bend of the river, soon forming floating islands. The stream being impassable even with a boat, it took five days before we ventured to cross with the pack-train on our way to Chetko; which place, 30 miles distant by trail, we reached after two days, as the trails were bad and much obstructed by fallen timber.

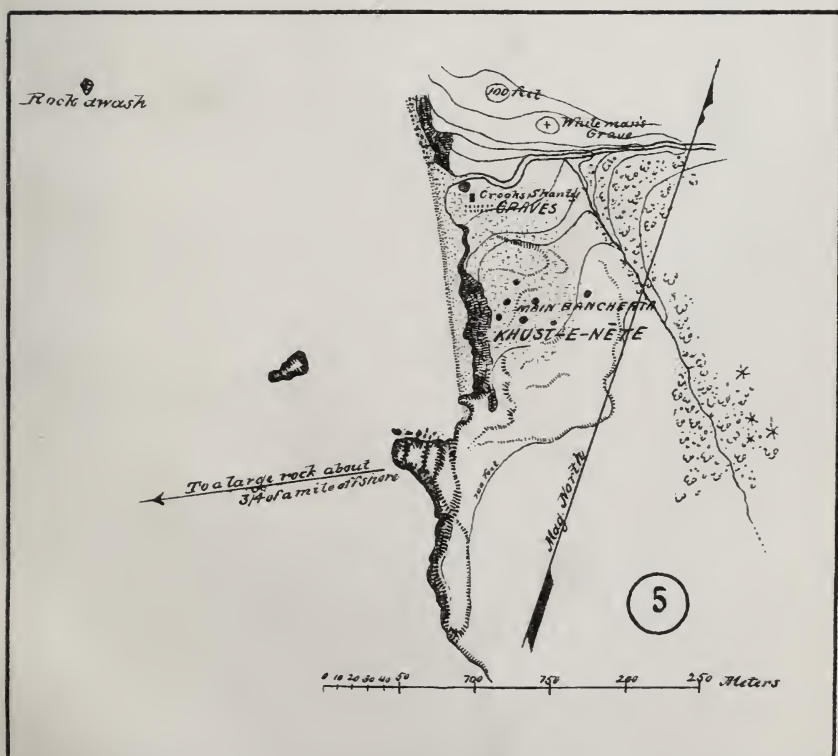
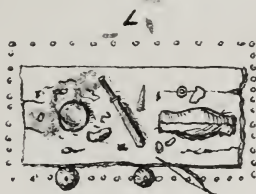
At the mouth of Chetko River we opened eleven graves, and found the dead buried in the same manner as noticed at Kustenēte; only that



Map of Rancheria and Vicinity near main Settlement on Rogue River.

each grave was, in addition, marked with a small heap of beach-worn rocks, whereby its location was easily recognized. Nothing was found buried with the dead, though several articles were discovered among the rubbish. The graves were located about 20 yards northwestward of those described in the Smithsonian Report of 1873.

From Chetko we moved, on the 4th of November, our camp-equipage and collection down to Crescent City for shipment with the first schooner. The steamboat connection between this place and San Francisco had already ceased for the winter, and we were compelled, as no schooner was at anchor and none soon expected, to go overland to Humboldt Bay, and thence by steamer to San Francisco.



Map of Rancheria of the Khust-e-nête at Hustenatê.

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